

5: Crowder J-5 (1955-1961) 1962
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571 only to civilise them but to make them aware of 'France's
871 achievements' in Africa. Thus, as Lucy Mair has pointed
648 out, history was taught so as to justify French occupation of
[873] West Africa. Several important *lycées* and secondary schools
were founded. The *Lycée Faidherbe* and the *Lycée Van Vollenhoven* were to provide the basis of the modern élite whilst the *Ecole Normale William Ponty* educated many of the present leaders of French-speaking Africa. It was this new generation of educated young men, produced in the late twenties and thirties, that was first to question the virtues of an assimilationist policy both on the political and moral plane.

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[645] formed as a result of the *loi cadre* reforms, are typical of the Frenchmen who have identified themselves with the country of their sojourn. Indeed such was the devotion of Peytavin to his party's cause that he was retained as Minister of Finance even after independence and opted for Senegalese nationality, a step that Bonifay found himself unable to take. These were men of high education—Bonifay, a well known lawyer, and Peytavin a veterinary surgeon. There were many others like them, not only applying such principles in the political field, but in the administration and commerce, who helped to dispel from the African what would otherwise have been a dominant impression of an isolationist and sometimes racist French community.

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[571] It would be foolish to paint too idealised a picture of race relations in Dakar. Many Europeans, particularly the *petit blanc*, openly admit to holding the African in contempt. But these are usually Europeans of little economic or political consequence and since independence their opinions have obviously carried negligible weight with the Senegalese.

• [873] Furthermore most Europeans in Dakar and the other main towns of Senegal, whatever their prejudices, send their children to local schools, where perforce they mix on terms of equality with Africans. The same is true of Dakar University which has a large number of French students, the majority of whom are girls whose parents are working in Dakar. Their brothers try if possible to go to French universities. Though friendships tend to be [572] within the same racial group, there is a considerable number of inter-racial friendships.

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472 The main point of conflict would appear to the casual visitor to be the economic domination of private enterprise and the more important subaltern jobs by Europeans. But before analysing any tensions that have arisen from this, it is essential to point to some special features of Senegalese society. In Senegal, by contrast with Nigeria, Ghana and Ivory Coast, there is no entrepreneurial class of

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the individuals questioned; and these differences are likely to become sharper— 178
45 per cent were farmers' sons, but considerable variations appeared according 571
to the socio-vocational category. The proportion of unskilled workers was 369
80 per cent; it was only 42 per cent for skilled workers and craftsmen; still 463
lower (33 per cent) for civil servants and subordinate office employees (the
widest category of the 'administrative bourgeoisie' characteristic of the colonial
period), 28 per cent for senior clerks and civil servants;¹ for members of the
liberal professions in the widest sense² it was no more than 21 per cent. These
last three categories taken as a whole represent the 'intellectual professions',
according to the meaning still ascribed by the great majority of Senegalese
to that phrase. Of those who had a father already in one of these professions,
three-quarters were engaged in the same work. The same process of stabiliza-
tion can, however, be observed, though less clearly, among specialized workers;
of those whose father was a worker, nearly two-thirds still belonged to the
same class; most of the others had been absorbed into the 'administrative
bourgeoisie'. These, moreover, are the two chief categories,³ from which there
has emerged a new type of elite which really began to grow in size only after
the last war.

Important changes in outlook, not only in Senegal, but in the whole of 178
French West Africa, have accompanied this most recent historical phase. 571
From the elite of the strictly colonial type as defined above there has begun
to emerge—and even to take on separate existence—a new intellectual elite,
still a relatively small group.⁴ This elite, which might be termed that of the [463]
liberal professions—this time in the strict sense of the phrase—having a
distinctly higher level of education and more definite professional competence,
is able to lay claim to a quantity of posts until now almost exclusively held
by Europeans. The category was not completely non-existent during the
pre-war period; it developed earlier in Senegal than in the other French
West African territories as a result of Senegal's possession of an embryonic
system of secondary education.⁵ Being numerically weak, this elite had an
opportunity of associating, to a certain extent, with the European population,
a fact which manifestly lessened its 'prospects of playing an active role and
assuming the leadership of the African masses. Furthermore, it continued to
follow the policy of assimilation and was the only element in the 'colonial
elit e' which succeeded in achieving it. It could find only a limited field of
action in the political life of the 'four communes'. It consisted mainly of lawyers,
a few members of the teaching profession and doctors and even a few admin- [873]
istrators. It doubtless set an example for a colonial elite of a far inferior grade
from which it was not entirely cut off; it showed them the road to be taken
by the seeker after modern knowledge. Prestige of the kind hitherto enjoyed
only by Europeans was transferred to them and was thus seen to be no longer
out of reach and so engendered ideas of power—a share, even if limited, of
political and administrative powers—and wealth, or material security, at the [554]
least. This role continued to develop after the war, though with a rather
slight change of direction.

1. In their holding posts of responsibility, regardless of their educational level.

2. Lawyers, teaching, medicine, etc.

3. The élite, especially.

4. Only a few hundred individuals, including members of the 'colonial élite' who were initially given such oppor-
tunities for completing their studies and reaching a higher status.

5. Ecole at Saint-Louis, later at Dakar.

369 Metropolis. Until recently the African elite has always come from
 [571] St. Louis. It is a sort of spiritual centre of Black Africa. It had the
 [873] first school—Lycée Faidherbe. And in 1866 it was given the first
 Hotel de Ville of the French Union. It is the cradle of the French
 Union. It would be a tragedy if it died.

369 To such men as these it seems scandalous that St. Louis with
 175 its great history and traditions should give way to a parvenue like
 Dakar. Of all West African cities St. Louis is the one with the most
 illustrious and fascinating history. It was called St. Louis after
 the great French King, Louis XIII, in the middle of the seventeenth
 century. However, in the following century it began to expand
 into a town whose inhabitants were a distinct race, comparable
 [563] to the Creoles of Sierra Leone. White and black intermarried to
 [591] form a group known as the St. Louisians. During the eighteenth
 [554] and nineteenth centuries these were the great families of the
 Senegal, though today they are losing importance. Names like
 Carpot, Descanet, Deves, Guillabert and Crespín are still remem-
 bered with respect in St. Louis.

[162] By the end of the eighteenth century the town had more than
 [633] 7,000 inhabitants and in 1778 a mayor, who had to be chosen
 from the local population, was charged with the maintenance of
 good relations between the people and the Governor. In 1833
 [641] all inhabitants of St. Louis were given the status of French
 citizens.

Perhaps the most important date for St. Louis and for West
 Africa was 1854, when General Faidherbe was appointed
 Governor. Today his mark is still firmly on St. Louis. The
 [361] ordered layout of the city and its streets were his work. The large
 [491] bridge connecting the island on which St. Louis stands to the
 mainland is named after him. The city's most important and
 famous school is the Lycée Faidherbe. And even now one can
 listen to old folk sitting on the benches of the park, in which his
 statue stands, telling tales of the great General, who had fought
 against the famous Toucouleur chief, El Hadj Omar and brought
 Senegal, Soudan and Mauretania into the French orbit. Perhaps
 some of these old people are his own descendants, for he is
 reputed to have been a prolific father.

[162] By 1878 St. Louis had grown to a city of 16,000 inhabitants,
 and despite the rapid expansion of Dakar and Rufisque farther
 down the coast, there was little to worry about the
 future.

The Revolution

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Their grounding in French culture is superb. It is evident in their writing and in the exacting logic of their minds which sometimes, as so often with the French, can lead them to points of profound illogicality. We have nothing comparable in British West Africa. The creative output of these French Africans, good or bad, literary or scientific, is immense, especially if one considers that the whole of French West Africa has a population just equal to that of Northern Nigeria. Some of their leaders, like Léopold Sédar Senghor, stand on intellectual pedestals in France at the foot of which even Jean Paul Sartre sometimes worships. The reasons for this aspect of the revolution are not altogether difficult to discover. The French have, as opposed to the British, always been assimilationists. 'La France entend conduire les peuples dont elle a la charge.' French culture was fed to these young men and their success today is a tribute to the success of the French 'civilizing mission'. The other important factor is that French intellectuals have on the whole been negrophiles, and African art and culture has long enjoyed a vogue in France.

Today French Africans have a striking confidence in their intellectual prowess that one rarely remarks in the British West African equivalent. They know French culture like Frenchmen, but, in the words of M. Alioune Diop, the editor of *Présence Africaine*, 'It is necessary that we black men affirm that we alone can interpret our own culture.' And this interpretation seems largely to involve a return to the past such as Cheick Anta Diop, a much respected Senegalese writer, has advocated. In a sense Ka is involved in this return, this new movement. For him and his fellows the burning question becomes: Will this new generation of intellects ever derive anything from such a return? Or indeed are they in any better position to grasp the essentials of their traditional culture than the French negrophiles who first made them aware of the values of their own art.

An African professor at the University of Dakar, Monsieur Allassane N'Daw, remarked in an article 'Un Africain devant la Culture Française' published in the journal *L'Éducation Africaine*, that when he held a discussion with his philosophy class on Malraux's views on Negro art there was 'no enthusiasm, nor even any particular interest, but rather general scepticism'. One of his pupils confessed that when he visited the museum at Abomey in

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369 Pl. XXIV appear here on unnumbered pages/. /389/ /Fig. 5
361 appears here. /

3. Greater Dakar. Of all the sectors of the Dakar agglomeration, Greater Dakar is certainly the one that presents the sharpest contrasts. The quarter of the "Gueule-Tapée" resembles the old Médina, while Fass and "Usine Biscuit" /Biscuit Factory/ remind one of Colobane, but aside from these there stand some modern quarters that are quite varied in appearance, contrasting strongly with the "Médinas," the "Colobanes," and the irregular quarters that surround them. It is in this sector of Greater Dakar that the University is found, raising its majestic buildings on the edge of the sea. It is flanked on the north by the rich quarter of Fann-Résidence where the residences of ministers and members of their cabinets, directors of houses of commerce, and high officials are grouped; to the south military villas and the allotment of Fann Hock separate it from the Gueule-Tapée. Point E, Zone A, Zone B, /390/ the Cité des Douanes /customs/, and that of the Port de Commerce are officials' quarters, while Bopp, formerly a swamp, has in recent years become a pretty little quarter, all the houses of which were built by officials [452] with the aid of the Crédit du Sénégal /Local Association of Senegal/. The S.I. C. A. P. which extend along the route des Puits /Roads of the Wells/ (Karacks, Baobabs, Liberté I, Liberté II, Liberté III, etc.) are pleasant lots intended to facilitate for Africans the acquisition of property (Fig. 5).

Finally, the quarter of Derklé forms, in several groupings of houses, a residence for petty African officials, another one for the African employees of private enterprises, and finally a quarter called the "Castors," the houses of which have been built by their associated and grouped owners with the aid of the public authorities.

[162] Greater Dakar is the most extensive and the heaviest populated sector in the Dakar agglomeration. It includes more than [563] 73,000 inhabitants, among whom is numbered one-sixth of the non-African population.

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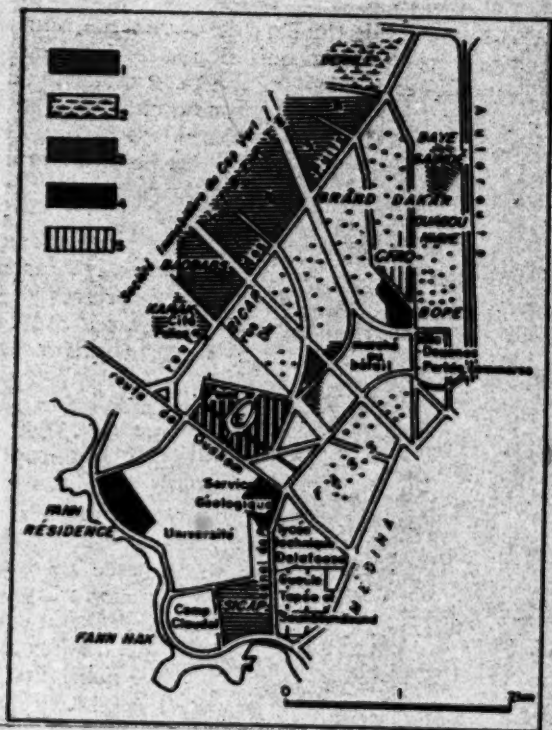


Fig. 5. Greater Dakar. -- 1. Officials' quarter;
2. Derklé; 3. H. L. M.; 4. houses of officials;
5. loan grouping.

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4. The suburbs. The suburbs of Dakar are composed of 13 villages, of which those closest to Dakar, Ouakam, N'Gor, Yoff, Hann, Thiaroye, and M'Bao resemble Colobane. The others remain typical traditional villages. Only Dagoudane-Pikime escapes either category. Created ex nihilo less than ten years ago to serve as an outlet for the irregulars of Dakar who were to be found there, driven back as urbanism progressed, it already has the appearance of a little city with its 10,000 inhabitants.